

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Expert reports unearthed by campaigners raise serious questions about the potential environmental damage and the extreme difficulty of building and operating the proposed monorail**

Consultant reports obtained by Save Fiordland, the campaign against the destructive plan for a monorail through Snowdon Forest, raise serious questions about the potential environmental damage and the extreme difficulty of building and operating the proposed monorail, arguing that not enough investigation has taken place to make a decision.

The reports were commissioned by the Department of Conservation and by Riverstone Holdings Ltd. Riverstone Holdings Ltd is the private company wanting to construct the monorail and seeking a concession from the Department of Conservation to construct and operate it through a World Heritage area.

One report by Wildland Consultants<sup>i</sup> of Dunedin for the Department of Conservation, says: "The potential effects of the monorail and construction track on ecological values are under-estimated and have not been sufficiently quantified... and it is not possible to fully assess mitigation requirements. Current mitigation proposals address only some types of effect."

The report adds that methodologies "set up to measure forest structure do not appear to have used objective methodology and are likely to be subject to bias."

A second report<sup>ii</sup> by planning company Morgan Pollard Associates says that the effects along the route are "insufficiently assessed" and have the potential for "unmitigated adverse effect" on the environment.

Reports commissioned by Riverstone Holdings itself also raise serious doubts.

Dr Christoph Zink has produced a PhD thesis on the geology of the Te Anau and Waiiau basins and has given his support and time voluntarily to the Save Fiordland campaign to study the reports commissioned by Riverstone Holdings Ltd. He believes these reports raise a number of serious concerns about the lack of investigation of environmental damage that would be caused by the monorail, the geological stability of the ground that the monorail will travel over, and the lack of clarity regarding the route that the monorail would take.

A report by Opus Engineering, for example, conducted a survey of the conservation land that the monorail would be built upon (using techniques such as "RT Differential, RTK and post processing") but some sections of the conservation land were not surveyed because "*time did not permit the entire section to be surveyed because of the limited working day available due to weather conditions such as fog. Sections not surveyed include: the section from 17.5 to 25.5km, a section of the Kiwiburn saddle where reception was very limited, and a section around 27km where reception was very limited.*"

Save Fiordland says it took considerable effort to dig out these reports, and raises concern that there could have been more transparency by the Department of Conservation in ensuring the public was aware of the concerns within these reports.

Journalists and the public can read more concerns about the viability of the monorail raised by reports such as this on the Save Fiordland website by [following this link](#) or by going to [www.savefiordland.org.nz](http://www.savefiordland.org.nz) and following the links from the No Monorail introduction page.

**For more information, contact**

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**i AUDIT OF TERRESTRIAL ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE  
FIORDLAND LINK EXPERIENCE PROPOSED MONORAIL  
DEVELOPMENT APRIL 2010 Contract Report No. 2401**

**ii** Fiordland Link Monorail Landscape Audit, May 2010